(b) what is the cost of the same borne by urea manufacturers in Russia, U.S.A. or Arab countries;

(c) Whether it is a fact that the production cost of urea is much higher in India than that in orther countries; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) At present the price of natural gas supplied to fertilizer plants at landfall point is Rs. 1750.00 per thousand cubic centres, excluding royalty, sales tax and transport charges. For gas supplied on HBJ pipeline, transport charges @ Rs. 850.00 per thousand cubic metres are payable in addition. the price of gas in the North East region is Rs. 1000/- per thousand cubic metres. A discount up to a maximum of Rs. 400/- per thousand cubic metres is also available in the North East on a case-to-case basis.

(b) The price of gas in Arab countries is in the range of $ 0.50 to $ 1.00 per MMBTU. Information is not available on current prices of gas supplied to urea plants in Russia and USA.

(c) The wieghted average production cost of indigenously produced urea is lower than the present cost of imported urea.

(d) Does not arise.

Expansion plans of NFL

453. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Fertilizers Limited has decided to finance its expansion plan at Vijaipur involving Rs. 1000 crores;

(b) if so, what are the details of the projects and in what manner the National Fertilizers Limited propose to arrange the necessary fund; and

(c) by when the project is likely to be completed and the details of production of fertilizers likely to be increased as a result of expansion of the plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) have taken up a project for doubling the production capacity of their gas-based fertilizer plant at Vijaipur (Madhya Pradesh) at an estimated cost of Rs. 987.3 crores. This will result in additional production capacity of 7.26 lakh tonnes per annum of urea. The project is expected to be completed by end-1996. The project is proposed to be funded partly out of internal resource generation of NFL and partly by raising long term loans/ borrowings from International/Indian financing institutions.

Performance of Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited

454. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public sector company, Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited is a loss making unit;

(b) if so, what was its performance during the last five years;

(c) whether it is also a fact that large quantities of fertiliser disappeared from the Company's godowns several times under suspicious circumstances and an enquiry was ordered into these and other matters including the involvement/ misconduct of its officials;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what action have been taken or is contemplated to be taken thereon;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the Company owns some mining sites in Rajasthan and other areas and most of these are not being operated at all and the staff recruited for the same has been idle for several years; and